#### SAPPED BY THE LOOM.

HOW THE STRENGTH OF THE MILL WOMEN IS EXHAUSTED.

New England Mothers Who Drudge in the Factories to Keep Life in Themselves and Their Babes-Wasted by Work They Turn to Artificial Stimulant.

ecial Correspondence.

Female life in a factory town is a com plex affair, and in many instances has all plex aftair, and in many instances has an the elements of tragedy. In the great majority of cases it is a ceaseless grind, so monotonous that almost anything would be a relief. The mill girl is a fa-vorite topic with writers whose lot throws them into such a village or city. But it is the girls presumably in their teens, the girls who have not turned the corner and started around the block of old maidhood, that come in for the description. There is a big class, indeed, if scription. There is a big class, indeed, if anything full half the female operatives in large cities, to whom this does not apply, and who fail of description or mention; that is, married women who work in factories. Ex-President Cleveland recently showed considerable interest on this subject, and could not see why so many women, and married ones at that, were working in the cotton factories of Fall River.

Several very valid reasons exist to account for this. A mill girl marries, fre-quently another operative, and for some quently another operative, and for some months she takes care of the home they take up. Then she begins to feel the difference between having to ask a man for every cent she has and having a pocketbook of her own. Perhaps for five years or longer she has carned her own money, drawn on it when she pleased, saved it if she felt like it, and in fact has done what she pleased vith her own is dividual earnings. She thin is m fact has done what she pleased vin her own individual earnings. She thinks how she could earn every week at least two-thirds as much as her husband does, sometimes quite as much as he can if conditions are favorable. She counts up how many things could be bought for the many washs before for that, and it isn't many weeks before that woman will be at work again. Soon after that children begin to arrive. and if the husband isn't made of pretty good mettle he finds the family too much for his scanty earnings, and be-tween the arrival of additions the woman has to go into the mill to help keep life in the children.

If she goes to work after the appearance of the first child she is pretty sure to be doomed to mill life the rest of her to be doomed to mill life the rest of her days or until her family have grown up and can help support her. The pluck and bravery exhibited by these women are wonderful, and frequently they work up to the very birth of a child and are again at their looms at the end of a

again at their looms at the end of a week. Such instances are not at all rare. A slight young woman stood in the police dock not many days ago. She was charged with drunkenness, a third offense, and to make matters worse carried in her arms a baby six weeks old. She held it up and begged the judge to let her off because she wasn't very well and she took the beer to give her strength to work for her baby. She said, "It is 6 weeks old, your honor, and I've worked in the mill ever since 'twas a week old to support it."

To try to number the women who have to do just as that one did is impossible. It is easy enough to say what

sible. It is easy enough to say what contributes to this state of affairs, but to remedy it is a matter beyond the control of the average man. But one thing is sure, there are many cases where husbands are brought before the court for non-support of wives, and another fact is that half the women who have to make these complaints are compelled to work in the mill if they would not

As to the question of intemperance and beer there are many excuses made. Factory life is perfect suicide for some women; others are strong as horses and

never break down. One of the latter species is the terror of a lot of women. She will turn off so many cuts of cloth or do so much work of a given kind that the difference between the amount she does and that of other women supposed to be working under the same conditions is too noticeable. The overseer and sec-ond hands are bound to get all the work they can out of the operatives under their charge. They go to some of these half sick women and say, "If you can't turn off more cuts I shall have to give your looms to somebody else," and the women make an extra spurt, and it means so much more weariness. The cotton is poor and it makes poor yarn and poorer warps, the weather hot, and sticky mawarps, the weather not, and sticky ma-chinery is balky, and when those women finish a day's work, in the summer and fall particularly, there is not one atom of strength left to carry them home. And the next day and the next the same thing must be gone through with.

One of the women said to me: "Is it

One of the women said to me: "Is it to be wondered at that when we know a glass or two of beer will put new life into us and make us forget our weariness that we are going to stop before we reach home and take those glasses?"

A prominent labor leader, who is best qualified of any one in the state to talk understandingly of operatives' lives, indures this statement, and he says, more-

dorses this statement, and he says, more over that what with speeding up ma-chinery and driving operatives so mill men are responsible for three-quarters of the drunkenness in mill towns. And this terrible speed and pressure tell most on these married women. They earn, if work is steady and the mill itearn, it work is steady and the min'te-self a fairly decent one with modern machinery, sufficient to take care of themselves and their children. They get better wages than the average shop women, and although the girl behind the counter looks down on the women behind the loom, there is just as much true womanliness in the latter as can be found in a similar number of the former.

The married mill women of Fall River and New England are classes seldom and New England are classes sendommentioned, but they constitute an important element, and, as ex-President Cleveland said when these facts were told him, "There aust be something radically wrong in a system under which such things have to exist."

Boston. K. L. McGurk.

Mortgaged Farms in Canada. Sir Richard Cartwright delivered an address before the farmers of Welling-ton county in the city of Guelph recent-

ly, in which he said:

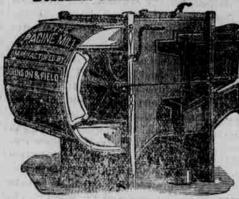
Now, although the population on the farming lands had diminished from one end of Ontario to the other, there was one thing that had increased, and that was the mortage debt on the farm one thing that had increased, and that was the mortgage debt on the farm lands. While the population had diminished, while the value of the farms had decreased, the mortgage indebtedness had increased with great rapidity. Sir Richard next told how in the olden decreased with great rapidity. times in many districts in Canada when a farmer had a farm to sell he was pur-sued by two, three or four buyers, all anxious to get it: but how was it today?
Why, in many fertile districts if you were to put half a dozen farms up for sale you would break the market, and find yourselves utterly unable to get pur-

chasers.

Many facts and figures were cited by Sir Richard Cartwright, showing that while an increase of wealth had taken place in one or two favored localines, and certain favored individuals had been enriched enormously at the cost of the bulk of the people, the net result of the adoption of the policy of the past ten years had been that at the very best 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 intelligent, capable, industrious people in as fine a country as the sun shines upon, taken collectively, had made no progress at all. During this time the federal taxation had increased many millions of dollars a year. creased many millions of dollars a year, and so had the public debt, the provin-cial debt and the municipal debt of Can-ada.

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The Grange in Peansylvania.

In his annual address to the State Grange of Pennsylvania, recently convened at Harrisburg, Worthy Master Rhone carefully reviewed the work of the organization. He claims that all the important legislation in the interest of agriculture for fifteen years has been seimportant legislation in the interest of agriculture for fifteen years has been secured through the non-partisan influence of the grange, namely: The correction of the extension of patents on sewing machines; curtailing the powers of transportation companies by making them subject to the control of the government: restricting the sale of oleomargarine by national law and preventing its manufacture and sale in this ing its manufacture and sale in this state: the driving out of this country of alien labor: the passage of the interstate law: the establishment of the agricult-nral department at Washington: the increase of the appropriation to public schools from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000, schools from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000, and the procurement of many important changes in the state revenue law. Also the creation of the state revenue commission, which has just closed its report to the state legislature, and the establishment of a co-operative trade system through which farmers can purchase direct from manufacturers and im-

Mr. Rhone adds that through the grange tariff currency questions will be settled on a just and regular basis, and continues: "That the agricultural class of the country is compared." continues: "That the agricultural class of the country is sorely depressed, largely the result of pernicious legislation, I greatly regret, is only too true: it is indeed a solemn fact. That real estate has been on a steady and rapid decline in value from the same cause is equally obvious. The depression is so great and general the test the regret of the farms of eral that not 1 per cent. of the farms of the state are holding their own and paying interest on the investment." Speaking of the alleged discrimination in the tax or the alleged discrimination in the tax laws against real estate, Mr. Rhone says: "The injustice of legislation which per-petrates such glaring frauds upon the agricultural class is too apparent to re-quire comment."

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